

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 1419

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, SP

SUBJ: BASE NEGOTIATIONS

REF: MADRID 1328

1. SUMMARY. ADMIRAL ANGEL LIBERAL LUCINI, CHIEF OF OPERATIONS
SPANISH NAVY GENERAL STAFF AND SENIOR NAVAL OFFICER ON NEGOTIATING
TEAM PROVIDED EMBOFF FOLLOWING SIGNIFICANT POINTS FEBRUARY 27:

A. CURRENT AGREEMENT UNDER NEGOTIATION PROBABLY MOST IMPORTANT
TO SPAIN SINCE 1953 IN VIEW OF EVENTS IN MEDITERRANEAN AND
EVOLUTION OF INTERNAL SITUATION IN SPAIN.

B. IT WAS IN US INTEREST TO ENSURE NEW AGREEMENT ACCEPTABLE
NOT ONLY TO SPANISH POPULACE BUT TO MILITARY AS WELL. MAJORITY
OF SPANIARDS, CIVILIAN AND MILITARY, REGARDED CURRENT AGREEMENT
AS NOT FAIR TO SPAIN.

C. LIBERAL INTIMATED THAT ROVIRA'S PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS WITH
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AMBASSADOR MCCLOSKEY TOUCHED ON SOME ASPECTS OF WHAT SPANISH

MAY PROPOSE IN NEXT ROUND. HE APPEARED TO BE ALLUDING TO ROVIRA'S REFERENCE TO "DEACTIVATION" OF TORREJON. NEXT SESSION WOULD BE WATERSHED IN CURRENT NEGOTIATIONS, AS MANY BASIC ISSUES WOULD BE CLARIFIED. END SUMMARY.

2. ADMIRAL LIBERAL LUCINI, SENIOR SPANISH NAVAL OFFICER ON NEGOTIATING TEAM, MADE SEVERAL SIGNIFICANT POINTS IN TOUR D'HORIZON WITH EMBOFF FEBRUARY 27.

3. LIBERAL OPINED THA CURRENT AGREEMENT UNDER NEGOTIATION WAS PROBABLY MOST IMPORTANT FOR SPAIN SINCE 1953. EARLIER AGREEMENTS OF 1970 AND 1963 LESS SIGNIFICANT. LIBERAL STRESSED THAT SITUATION IN SPAIN FAR DIFFERENT NOW FROM WHAT IT WAS EVEN AS RECENTLY AS 1970. GREATER IMPORT DERIVED FROM GENERAL DETERIORATION OF SITUATION IN MEDITERRANEAN AND PORTUGAL AS WELL AS FACT THAT SPAIN ON THRESHOLD OF TRANSITION IN TERMS OF ITS INTERNAL POLITICAL SITUATION.

4. LIBERAL STRESSED THAT IT WAS IN US INTEREST TO ENSURE THAT NEW AGREEMENT WAS ACCEPTABLE TO SPANISH POPULACE, AND TO MILITARY AS WELL. HE VOLUNTEERED THAT THERE WAS ALWAYS SMALL MINORITY AMONG SPANIARDS WHICH WOULD OPPOSE ANY AGREEMENT AT ALL. BUT HE DISCOUNTED THAT GROUP. MAJORITY OF SPANISH ONLY NEEDED TO BE CONVINCED THAT AGREEMENT WAS "FAIR". SAME WAS TRUE FOR MILITARY.

5. AS EXAMPLE, LIBERAL SAID THAT US NAVY HAD DONE MUCH BETTER BY SUPPLYING SHIPS TO SPANISH NAVY THAN PROVIDED IN AGREEMENT. IN OTHER WORDS, AS OLD AND IN BAD CONDITION AND AS DIFFICULT TO MAINTAIN AS SHIPS WERE, SPANISH WOULD HAVE RECEIVED MUCH WORSE HAD US NAVY STUCK TO LETTER OF AGREEMENT. LIBERAL HAD TRIED TO PERSUADE MANY SPANISH NAVY OFFICERS WHO COMPLAINED ABOUT SHIPS THAT US NAVY SHOULD NOT BE BLAMED, SINCE WHAT SPAIN GOT WAS BETTER THAN AGREEMENT CALLED FOR. POINT OF HIS ARGUMENT WAS THAT AGREEMENT WAS AT FAULT AS IT WAS UNFAIR TO SPAIN. HENCE IT NO MORE POPULAR WITH SPANISH MILITARY THAN GENERAL POPULACE, AND AS A CONSEQUENCE SPANISH MADE CLEAR FROM FIRST NEGOTIATING SESSION IN NOVEMBER THAT NEW AGREEMENT MUST BE NEGOTIATED. HE SAID HE ADDRESSED THIS POINT AT THE WASHINGTON ROUND IN DEC.

6. LIBERAL WOULD NOT BE DRAWN OUT ON SPECIFICS FOR NEXT ROUND,
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BUT INTIMATED THAT ROVIRA'S PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS WITH AMBASSADOR MCCLOSKEY TOUCHED ON SOME ASPECTS OF WHAT SPANISH HAVE IN MIND. WE WOULD ASSUME THAT THIS IS IN REFERENCE TO CONSIDERATION FOR "DEACTIVATION" OF TORREJON WHICH ROVIRA MENTIONED. LIBERAL THOUGH NEXT SESSION SHOULD BE "VERY INTERESTING" AND SUGGESTED THAT PERHAPS IT WOULD BE WATERSHED IN CURRENT COURSE OF NEGOTIATIONS, IN THAT MANY BASIC ISSUES WOULD BE CLARIFIED. HE SAID SPANISH WERE VERY INTERESTED IN WHAT NEW PROPOSALS U.S. SIDE

WOULD HAVE RELATIVE TO SPANISH PARTICIPATION IN WESTERN DEFENSE. HE ECHOED VIEWS OF PERINAT AND DOLZ REGARDING PLANNING PER SE, I.E., THEY WERE NOT ENDS IN THEMSELVES, BUT SHOULD BE PART OF BROADER EFFORT OF MILITARY PARTICIPATION. SPANISH HOPED US WOULD HAVE SOME NEW DEVELOPMENTS TO PROPOSE IN THIS REGARD.

7. LIBERAL ALSO REFLECTED DISTRESS ON PART OF SPANISH MILITARY OVER EVENTS IN PORTUGAL. HE HAD READ IN PORTUGUESE NEWSPAPER THAT "WELFARE COMMITTEES" WERE NOW TAKING OVER DIRECTION OF PORTUGUESE NAVAL VESSELS. THESE COMMITTEES HE SAID APPARENTLY WERE COMPOSED OF OFFICERS, NCOS AND ENLISTED MEN WHO COLLECTIVELY MADE DECISIONS REGARDING THE OPERATION OF THE SHIP. HE OPINED THAT THAT THIS WAS SYMPTOMATIC OF THE GENERAL DIRECTION OF EVENTS IN PORTUGAL WHERE A SMALL MINORITY OF LESS THAN 10 PERCENT WAS INEXORABLY SPREADING ITS INFLUENCE AND POWER AS FURTHER EVIDENCED BY INTER ALIA CONSTANT HARASSMENT OF CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS.

8. COMMENT: LIBERAL IS A RESERVED, SOFT SPOKEN, ALMOST COURTLY OFFICER WHO CONVEYS A DIRECTNESS TEMPERED BY SENSITIVITY. LIKE DOLZ (WHO HAS A FLAIR FOR LANGUAGES, WHO ENJOYS BEETHOVEN, AND WHO IS POLITICALLY SENSITIVE, HE IS BROAD GAUGED, BUT OTHERWISE LESS ANIMATED AND LESS PRONE TO COLORFUL LANGUAGE. HIS COMMENTS REGARDING THE FUTURE INTERNAL PICTURE AND TRANSITION PERIOD IN SPAIN REFLECTED A SERIOUS PERSONAL CONCERN, AND HE TOOK PAINS TO SPEAK TO THIS SITUATION CAREFULLY AND CONVINCINGLY. HE DEPLORED THE ATTITUDE OF OTHER EUROPEAN NATIONS WHICH COULD HELP SPAIN IN THIS DELICATE TIME, BUT WHICH DID NOT SEEM TO CARE.

9. THUS FAR WE HAVE DISCERNED NO EVIDENCE THAT SPANISH NEGOTIATORS HAVE BROKEN RANKS, I.E., THAT MILITARY ON ONE HAND MIGHT HAVE BACKED AWAY FROM POLITICAL OBJECTIVES IN EFFORT TO CONSOLIDATE AND PRESERVE PURELY MILITARY INTERESTS DERIING
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FROM ANY NEW AGREEMENT. MOREOVER, WHILE IT MAY SEEM OUT OF CHARACTER FOR SPANISH MILITARY OFFICERS TO BE SO CONCERNED WITH PUBLIC OPINION, THE CONCERN SEEMS GENUINE AND NOT A MERE FACADE FOR NEGOTIATING PURPOSES. ON OTHER HAND, GOS IS PERFECTLY CAPABLE, FOR EXAMPLE, OF INVOKING PRESS CENSORSHIP AT THE DROP OF A HAT, AS THEY DID ON THE MOROCCAN ISSUE AT ONE POINT AND AGAIN TEMPORARILY ONLY A FEW DAYS AGO REGARDING A SPEECH BY SPAIN'S PRETENDER DON JUAN DE BORBON. YET THEY HAVE NOT BEEN MOVED TO DO ANYTHING ABOUT INTERMITTENT EDITORIAL CARPING FROM THE PRESS ABOUT THE AGREEMENT, OR MORE IMPORTANTLY PRESS SPECULATION SUCH AS OCCURRED IN SPANISH NEWSPAPERS THIS WEEK OVER POSSIBILITY OF CLOSING TORREJON AND MORON. WHILE SPANISH MOTIVES MAY APPEAR SOMEWHAT DISINGENUOUS, PRESS ATENTION IS A TWO-EDGE SWORD WHICH PUTS MFA UNDER CONSIDERABLE PRESSURE AT SAME TIME THAT IT PUTS OUR SIDE ON NOTICE REGARDING UNPOPULARITY

OF U.S. MILITARY FACILITIES IN SPAIN UNDER CURRENT ARRANGEMENTS.
WE CAN ONLY SURMISE THAT AS LONG AS CRITICISM DOES NOT GET OUT
OF HAND, GOS WILLING IN LONG TERM INTERESTS TO STAND THE GAFF
AND ALLOW SOME STEAM LETTING.
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